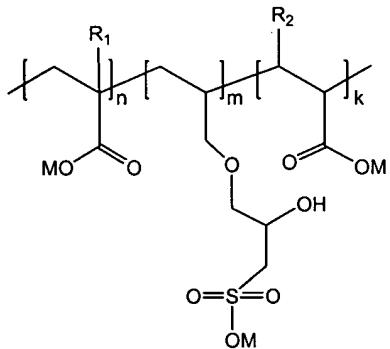


IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A process for the treatment of a fibre material comprising the step of contacting the fibre material in an aqueous medium with a chelating agent and a polymer having the following general formula



I

wherein

R_1 is a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group containing 1 to 12 carbon atoms,

R_2 is $-COOM$ or $-CH_2COOM$,

M is a hydrogen atom, an alkali metal ion, an alkaline earth metal ion, an ammonium ion or a mixture thereof,

n , m and k are molar ratios of corresponding monomers, wherein n is 0 to 0.95, m is 0.05 to 0.9, and k is 0 to 0.8, and $(n+m+k)$ equals 1, and

the weight average molecular weight is between 500 and 20,000,000 g/mol.

2. (Original) The process according to claim 1 wherein the chelating agent and the polymer are introduced as a mixture or the chelating agent and the polymer are introduced separately.

3. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the fibre material is a cellulosic fibre material comprising a chemical, mechanical or chemi-mechanical pulp or a recycled fibre material.

4. (Currently amended) The process according to ~~any of~~ claims 1 to 3 wherein the treatment comprises bleaching the fibre material with an alkaline peroxide solution in the presence of the chelating agent and the polymer.
5. (Original) The process according to claim 4 wherein the bleaching is preceded by a treatment with a chelating agent.
6. (Currently amended) The process according to ~~any of~~ claims 1 to 3, wherein the treatment comprises pretreating the fibre material in the aqueous medium comprising the chelating agent and the polymer.
7. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 6 wherein the pH of the aqueous medium in the pretreatment is between 3 and 7, ~~preferably between 4 and 6.5, and more preferably between 4.5 and 6.~~
8. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 6 or 7 wherein the pretreatment is followed by a bleaching with a peroxygen compound optionally in the presence of the chelating agent and the polymer.
9. (Original) The process according to claim 8 wherein the peroxygen compound is hydrogen peroxide, peracetic acid or Caro's acid.
10. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the fibre material comprises a recycled fibre material, and wherein the treatment further comprises de-inking the recycled fiber material in the aqueous medium comprising the chelating agent and the polymer.
11. (Currently amended) The process according to any of claims 1 to 10 wherein in formula I n is 0.4 to 0.9, m is 0.1 to 0.5, and k is 0 to 0.5.
12. (Currently amended) The process according to ~~any of~~ claims 1 to 11 wherein the weight

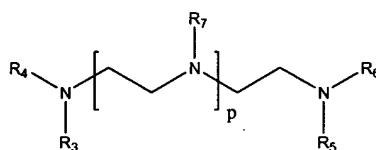
average molecular weight of the copolymer is between 1,000 and 1,000,000 g/mol and preferably between 2,000 g/mol and 500,000 g/mol.

13. (Currently amended) The process according to any of claims 1 to 12 wherein the total amount of the chelating agent and the polymer in the treatment is 0.05 to 10 kg per ton of dry fibre material, preferably 0.1 to 5 kg per ton of dry fibre material, and more preferably 0.2 to 4 kg per ton of dry fibre material.

14. (Currently amended) The process according to any of claims 1 to 13 wherein the weight ratio of the polymer to the chelating agent is from 1:4 to 4:1, preferably from 1:3 to 3:1.

15. (Currently amended) The process according to any of claims 1 to 14 wherein the polymer is a copolymer of 3-allyloxy-2-hydroxypropanesulfonic acid and at least one of the monomers acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, maleic acid, and itaconic acid, or a salt thereof.

16. (Currently amended) The process according to any of claims 1 to 15 wherein the chelating agent is a compound having the following general formula



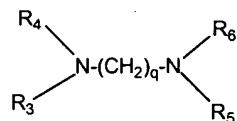
II

wherein

p is 0 or an integer of 1 to 10,

R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆ and R₇ are independently a hydrogen atom or an alkyl chain having 1 to 6 carbon atoms and containing an active chelating ligand, such as a carboxylic, phosphonic or hydroxyl group or a salt thereof.

17. (Currently amended) The process according to any of claims 1 to 15 wherein the chelating agent is a compound having the following general formula



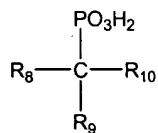
III

wherein

q is an integer of 3 to 10,

R_3 , R_4 , R_5 and R_6 are independently a hydrogen atom or an alkyl chain having 1 to 6 carbon atoms and containing an active chelating ligand, such as a carboxylic, phosphonic or hydroxyl group or a salt thereof.

18. (Currently amended) The process according to any of claims 1 to 15 wherein the chelating agent is a compound having the following general formula



IV

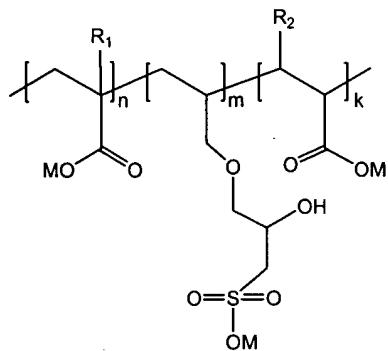
wherein

R_8 is a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group containing 1 to 6 carbon atoms or an alkyl chain having 1 to 6 carbon atoms and containing a carboxylic, phosphonic or hydroxyl group,

R_9 is a hydrogen atom, hydroxyl group, phosphonic group, carboxylic group or alkyl chain having 1 to 6 carbon atoms and containing one or two carboxylic groups, and

R_{10} is a hydrogen atom, hydroxyl group, carboxylic group, alkyl group containing 1 to 6 carbon atoms or alkyl chain having 1 to 6 carbon atoms and containing a carboxylic group, or a salt thereof.

19. (Currently amended) A composition comprising a chelating agent and a polymer having the following general formula



wherein

R_1 is a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group containing 1 to 12 carbon atoms,

R_2 is $-COOM$ or $-CH_2COOM$,

M is a hydrogen atom, an alkali metal ion, an alkaline earth metal ion, an ammonium ion or a mixture thereof,

n , m and k are molar ratios of corresponding monomers, wherein n is 0 to 0.95, m is 0.05 to 0.9, and k is 0 to 0.8, and $(n+m+k)$ equals 1, and

the weight average molecular weight is between 500 and 20,000,000 g/mol.

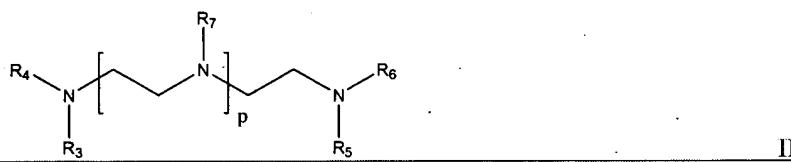
20. (Original) The composition according to claim 19 wherein in formula I n is 0.4 to 0.9, m is 0.1 to 0.5, and k is 0 to 0.5.

21. (Currently amended) The composition according to claim 19-~~or 20~~ wherein the weight average molecular weight of the copolymer is between 1,000 and 1,000,000 g/mol and preferably between 2,000 g/mol and 500,000 g/mol.

22. (Currently amended) The composition according to ~~any of~~ claims 19-~~to~~ 24 wherein the weight ratio of the polymer to the chelating agent is from 1:4 to 4:1, preferably from 1:3 to 3:1.

23. (Currently amended) The composition according to ~~any of claims 19 to 22~~ wherein the polymer is a copolymer of 3-allyloxy-2-hydroxypropanesulfonic acid and at least one of the monomers acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, maleic acid, and itaconic acid or a salt thereof.

24. (Currently amended) The composition according to ~~any of claims 19 to 23~~, wherein the chelating agent is as defined in ~~any of claims 16 to 18~~ a compound having the following general formula



wherein

p is 0 or an integer of 1 to 10,

R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆ and R₇ are independently a hydrogen atom or an alkyl chain having 1 to 6 carbon atoms and containing an active chelating ligand.

25. (Currently amended) The process of claim 1, wherein treatment of the fibre material further comprises Use of a composition according to any of claims 19 to 24 as a stabilizer in bleaching the of a fibre material in an aqueous medium.

26. (Currently amended) The process of claim 1, wherein treatment of the fibre material further comprises Use of a composition according to claim 19 to 24 as a stabilizer in deinking of a recycled fibre material.